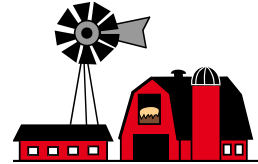




**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS**  
**Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission**  
c/o Department of Environmental Management  
235 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908



**AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016 MEETING**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kevin Nelson, Ken Ayars, Martha Neale, Dave Wallace

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Fay Strongin, Will Wright, Jon Reiner, George Mason, Everett Stuart

**STAFF:** Lauren Farley – DEM, Joe Bachand - NRCS

**GUESTS:** Nicholas Gorham - Farm Bureau Attorney, Glenn Cottrell – Cottrell Homestead Farm

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI by Kevin Nelson, Vice Chair. Quorum was not present.

Guests Nicholas Gorham, representing the Farm Bureau and Farmer Glenn Cottrell were welcomed. Members of the Commission acknowledged lack of quorum. Informal discussion ensued. No votes were taken.

1. K. Ayars spoke about the increased interest from solar companies to develop infrastructure on agricultural land and how this may affect protected farmland. The use of renewable energy is not inconsistent with DDR covenants for use on farm. There is increasing pressure to develop solar farms for commercial energy production to be sold to the grid. G. Cottrell owns protected farmland and wishes to relocate 1 acre of his 4.6 acre building envelope. He is also interested in constructing a farm stand. The Commission advised that a farm stand is not prohibited in the DDR. Commercial energy generation is specifically prohibited. The flexibility to relocate the 1-acre would enable solar development and generate revenue. Some policy tension exists between the State encouraging the development of renewable energy versus the ramifications of losing productive agricultural land. G. Cottrell was advised to submit formal request to alter buildable area. DEM staff will take steps to have informed legal opinions weigh in on formalizing policies.

2. Reading and approval of the minutes of the meeting of 11/19/15 (deferred)

3. Set meeting schedule for 2016 (deferred)

4. Commission Officer elections (deferred) - L. Farley informed commission that member W. Wright will be resigning from board. Vote needed on:

- a. Chairperson
- b. Vice Chairperson

5. Review of current ALPC budget – L. Farley provided update on current budget. The current balance is \$3,132,167. Current project commitments are \$172,000 to Andrews in Exeter, \$150,000 to Rippin in N. Kingstown, \$550,000 to Bailey, \$185,000 to Regnier/Fletcher Road, \$70,000 to Gordon in S. Kingstown, \$200,000 to Whaley Farm in South Kingstown, \$1,000,000

to Adams in Exeter, \$330,000 to Broadwall in Coventry, \$160,000 to Cesario in N. Smithfield, \$233,333 to Hibbad in Tiverton. Current overhead commitments (appraisals and survey) total \$85,000.

6. Status update of farms in negotiation – L. Farley provided update on active projects.

- c. Adams: Glen Rock Road, Exeter. L. Farley informed Commission about request to alter acreage enrolled in project. Commission requested new boundaries be re-scored
- d. Andrews: 99 Ten Rod Road, Exeter. L. Farley informed Commission that project was submitted to NRCS for ACEP- ALE funding.

7. South Kingstown Land Trust: request for \$10,000 reimbursement for overhead costs associated with the Gordon Farm project, Liberty Lane, South Kingstown. (deferred)

8. Review of farms eligible for funding. L. Farley gave brief overview. Commission members requested DEM staff contact owners regarding their interest in program.

9. Weeden Farm, Matunuck Schoolhouse Road, South Kingstown: L. Farley provided update from the Attorney General on South Kingstown Land Trust's amendment request. Final opinion of AG forthcoming and will be shared with Commission.

10. Farmland Acquisition Program: brief update on progress with the Rules & Regulations – L. Farley informed Commission that new rules will likely be enacted during current legislative session.

11. Stewardship: update on monitoring progress – L. Farley reported that easements that received federal NRCS funding are compliant with monitoring. State held easements will be monitored on a 3 year cycle by Division of Ag. staff.

12. NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program: J. Bachand reported that ACEP program has increased support from remote real estate team.

There being no further business, on a motion by D. Wallace and a second by the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:20

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Farley, Division of Planning & Development, RIDEM